THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko*, a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves. and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from